

so one morning
you finally get up the energy
to carry the old couch
out to the curb.
when you come home from work
it's still sitting there.

you call them up
prepared to give them
the biggest bunch of shit they ever heard
and they tell you that they need
three days notice.

i'm not just mad
i mean
it's real embarrassing
people knowing what a pile of junk
my furniture must be
if i waited this long
to throw out that couch.

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

at this late age
to try to survive
the technological threat of the future
one thing struck me more than any other.

i don't care how sick and perverted
or how typical it is but
the first thing i noticed
the first time i went to college
and the first thing i noticed
upon my return ten years later
was the girls.

TWO OUT OF THREE

"Stroberg, Stroberg, Stroberg," he said
squeezing the words out of the corner of his mouth.
"Can't you read the damn sign?
It says turn off the engine
and no smoking, doesn't it?"

he had me there.
forget that it was twenty below zero
minus eighty with the windchill factor.
there i was
sitting in the cab
engine and heater running
smoking a cigarette and reading Time magazine
like i always do when i gas up the truck.

hey, i could get thirty days off
for reading while on duty
but for trying to blow the place up
they just yell at you.

i said, "Yes Mr. Sutton, I can read the sign."

-- Paul Stroberg

Lombard IL

Note: In WR:93, the printer masked off the endings
of four lines and the title of the following poem.
It is printed below in an unmutilated state.

I'LL NOT COP OUT ON RHODODENDRONS THIS TIME

Much less on asphodels. What in shit have
flowers to do with any of it? Not that you

Came upon the scene empty-handed. Nor that
you were even quite naked. Flowers & flowers

& flowers. Suppose that had been the way
it was, though it wasn't. Naked you surely

Were not. Your agility in heavy mail would
well put a jackrabbit to shame. If you don't

See I am not Joyce Carol Oates folding up
the sun in an omelette -- then you will not

See what all the breaking of all the eggs
has been about. Fuck you.

GOD AND THE DEVIL. WHY

Should we project our goodness
upon an external entity? Why

Should we project our badness
upon an external entity? That

This is our nature is not
a useful answer -- nor very interesting.